D. Wood Carving and Basket Weaving

Wood carving and basket weaving will be mentioned here briefly for continuity. The following wooden objects have already been mentioned: the chair (p. 181), the whisk (p. 199), the winnowing basin (p. 201), the spoon (p. 206), the mortar (p. 200), and the honey stick)p. 205). The text illustrations round out the picture of all the main types of wooden dishes and pails. [Picture. Repair of Wooden Article.] An informed Hottentot told me that the wooden vessels mentioned, which today have been supplanted chiefly by European metalware, are still made here and there, half boring them out and half scraping them out with an instrument which is called *//gare-s. The latter consists of a knife blade bent at right angles to its wooden handle. Unfortunately I did not succeed in acquiring such a tool.

Of interest is the way in which the Hottentots mend wooden dishes. Leaks and cracks in the dishes and pots are sealed with tough root fibres. To the right and left of the crack (a), holes are made in the wood and a root thread (b) is drawn through the holes across the crack, so that it bridges it on the outside. [Picture (244 and 245). Wooden dishes. 1/4 natural size. a, d, e: //hoëti, usually milk containers. h and i: the same with root mending. c and f: !ao//hoëti, milk pails, "neck bamboo." g: ≠aigaĩ //hoës, "foot bamboo." b: !ore-s, dish used for eating.] [246] A cross thread (c) is twisted around these bridges in the way the illustration shows. Only two parallels of the latter thread are shown. The scale is enlarged so that the method of twisting could be seen. Next to * is the end of the cross string; it is firmly fastened with several twistings. The entire repaired area is rubbed with fat. Gradually enough dust collects in the root weaving so that the hole is completely glued together.

Except for making mats, basket weaving is insignificant. Besides the nara sieves (cf. p. 199) only the fish baskets should be mentioned which the Hottentots use for catching fish in the Fish River. I did not get to see one.

E. Use of Clay, Stone and Metal

Work with the above materials has remained at the most primitive stages.

1. Formerly the Hottentots made simple urn-shaped pots by kneading and baking them out of clay and sand. The fragments found in

[Refer to diagram on p. 59 (A).—Analyst]

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

323 hole in the ground and burned by a fire around and inside it, till it was baked through and hard. Each family as a rule possessed several of these pots, for water and milk, and for cooking.[1]

322 [177] Besides these pots the Hottentots also made wooden milk bowls and pails, dishes, and eating vessels. These are now largely replaced among the Naman by European hardware, but the craft is still kept up among the more independent families. There is no detailed description of the process of manufacture. Apparently the utensils are fashioned entirely by cutting and boring, no fire or other hot object being employed. All wood-carving is done by the men. The block of wood is shaped and smoothed on the outside with a knife, then hollowed out inside, partly by cutting and partly by boring, by means of a semicircular iron blade fixed in a wooden haft. Some of the milk pails in shape closely resemble the earthenware pots, even having ears of the same style for suspension. Wooden spoons, pestles and mortars, *!nara* drills, walking sticks and kirris are also made, and within recent times the more expert craftsmen, aided by new and better tools, have also begun to make tables, chairs, and bedposts for their household furniture.[2]

321 Spoons and *buchu* powder-boxes are made by the women from tortoise-shells, while the men cut the horns of animals into receptacles for fat, for odd substances used for medicinal and magical purposes, and for gunpowder, as well as into trumpets used for signalling in war. Formerly also the tusks of elephants were cut with a knife into rings used as armlets. The manufacture of stone implements
324 does not appear to have been practised at all by the Hottentots, at least within historical times. Whether they did so at one time we have no means of telling, but in the light of our present knowledge there is no good reason for assuming that, as in the case of the Bushmen, it is an art they have lost. The only work they do in stone is the cutting and boring of serpentine into pipes by means of a knife. We know also that they formerly used sharp flakes of quartz for making cuts on a person's body in some of their ceremonies, but there is nothing to indicate that these flakes were worked in any special way. Unworked stones are used to support the cooking pot over the fire, and a handmill is formed by a thin flat stone serving as a hearth on

[1] Op. cit., 116–17; cf. Graevenbroeck, op. cit., 24–5.
[2] Schultze, op. cit., 244–6; Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten," 335; Olpp, *Angra Pequena*, 27.

9: Ten Rhyne D-5 (1673) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

CHAP. XIII.

Furniture.

Whoever makes enquiry into the matter of their furniture will need to ponder the examples of the ancient world, where he will find that the Theban Crates made a gift of his property to the people, and chose the wilderness, scorned his parks and orchards for a single staff, and took in exchange for his splendid villas one wallet for his back. For as in the old days the Cynics were contented merely with a wallet and a stick, so now are the Hottentots. The wallet and the stick are to the Hottentots of to-day as they were to the Cynics in antiquity, the equivalent of the General's cloak, the King's diadem, the bonnet of the high priest, and the augur's staff. Nor in this matter do they yield to Diogenes who contended with the great king of Macedon about true kingship, glorying in his staff rather than in a sceptre, in his wallet more than in a throne; for the Hottentots are always contented with their lot. They do sometimes however use cups, either shells which they have collected on the seashore[21]) or the shells of tortoises which they have eaten. These they call *sirigoos*. They roast them in the ashes and eat them, and sell them to strangers for a little tobacco. But if they lack a cup, then, like the Cynics, they drink water from the hollow of their hand. Their food they prepare sometimes in a pot that has been thrown away, sometimes under the ashes; otherwise they devour it raw. But the richer among them make most beautiful clay pots for use in cooking,[22]) while others from the trunks of trees make oblong troughs for food.[23])

The pots were often ornamented round the neck with rows of dots or short broad lines, apparently produced by incising. They were unglazed and generally somewhat thick, although a few have been found rather thin and evenly built throughout. (Schapera, *Khoisan Peoples*, 313.) Grevenbroek (see below, p. 251) briefly desribes their mode of manufacture.

[23]) The Hottentots made not only eating vessels, but also milk bowls, pails and dishes out of wood. These utensils were apparently fashioned entirely by cutting and boring, no fire or other hot object being employed. Their different shapes and mode of manufacture are summarized by Schapera, *op. cit.*, 314.